

Message Text

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21

ACTION EA-10

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----- 086104

O R 080515Z MAR 75

FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 3399

INFO ACOMMUSAG NKP THAILAND

COMIPAC HONOLULU

CINCPAC HONOLULU

C O N F I D E N T I A L SAIGON 2565

FOLLOWING SENT ACTION SAIGON INFO USDAO SAIGON 07 MAR 75 FROM
NHA TRANG REPEATED TO YOU

QUOTE

C O N F I D E N T I A L NHA TRANG 0135

DAO FOR AOSOP-OR/IX/IS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS PINT MILI VS

SUBJECT: MILITARY SITUATION NORTHERN MR-2

1. ON MARCH 6 THE HEAVY FIGHTING IN NORTHERN MR-2 CONTINUED INTO ITS THIRD DAY. QL-19 IN BINH KHE DISTRICT IN BINH DINH AND IN EASTERN LE TRUNG DISTRICT IN PLEIKU REMAINED INTERDICTED BY COMMUNIST FORCES. QL-21 IN KHANH DUONG DISTRICT IN KHANH HOA ALSO WAS STILL BLOCKED BY THE COMMUNISTS. DETAILS ON THE CURRENT MILITARY SITUATION ALONG QL-19 AND QL-21 AND IN KONTUM FOLLOW.

2. IN BINH DINH, THERE WERE TWO SHELLINGS AND ONE SIZABLE GROUND CONTACT EAST OF BINH KHE DISTRICT TOWN NEAR QL-19. AT 061055HRS THE COMMUNISTS LAUNCHED FIVE 82-MM MORTAR SHELLS AT 3 GVN
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PLTS LOCATED AT BR 723400, WOUNDING 10 SOLDIERS, AND, AT THE

SAME TIME, THEY LAUNCHED 40 82-MM MORTAR SHELLS AT THE 14TH ARMORED CAVALRY GROUP STATIONED AT BR 715405 (THE RESULTS OF THIS SHELLING HAVE NOT BEEN REPORTED). THE GROUND CLASH OCCURRED BETWEEN 1630 AND 1830 HRS AT BR 693412 AND INVOLVED THE 42ND RECON CO AND A CO OF THE 42DN ARVN REGT (THE ENTIRE 42ND WAS BROUGHT TO BINH KHE FROM PHU MY AS OF 060700 HRS TO SWEEP QL-19, AND AN UNIDENTIFIED COMMUNIST FORCE. REPORTEDLY THE GVN TROOPS SUSTAINED 5 WOUNDED, WHILE THE COMMUNISTS LOST 25 KIA, AND SEVERAL WEAPONS AND DOCUMENTS. IN THE VICINITY OF THE AN KHE PASS WEST OF BINH KHE DISTRICT TOWN, THERE WERE ALSO TWO SHELLINGS AND ONE GROUND ATTACK. AT 1030 HRS, THE COMMUNISTS FIRED UNSPECIFIED ORDNANCE AT THE FORWARD COMMANDE POST OF THE 47TH ARVN REGT AT BR 636455 AND AT THE 3RD BN OF THE 47TH ARVN REGT AT BR 636455 AND AT THE 3RD BN OF THE 47TH ARVN AT BR 477437. AT APPROXIMATELY THE SAME TIME, THE COMMUNISTS FIRED UNSPECIFIED ORDNANCE AND LAUNCHED A GROUND ATTACK AGAINST THE 3RD AND 4TH COS/1ST BN OF THE 47TH REGT AT BR 600467-528455; NO FURTHER INFORMATION ON THIS CONTACT IS AVAILABLE AT THIS TIME. ALSO ON MARCH 6, THE COMMUNISTS LAUNCHED SEVEN 107-MM ROCKETS AT BINH KHE SUBSECTOR HQS CAUSING NO CASUALTIES, FIRED TWENTY 82-MM MORTAR SHELLS AT PHU MY SUBSECTOR HQS CAUSING NO CASUALTIES, AND LAUNCHED TEN 107-MM ROCKETS AT THE 42ND REGTAL HQS BASED AT BINH KHE SETTING FIRE TO 6 BARRELS OF POL AND DESTROYING ONE 50-MM MACHINE GUN. FOR ITS PART, THE GVN DIRECTED 40 AIR SORTIES AT 16 KM EAST OF AN TUC (VIC AN KHE PASS) DESTROYING 2 AA GUNS AND 1 RECOILLESS RIFLE.

3. IN PLEIKU, AT 061730 HRS, A COMMUNIST FORCE ATTACKED THE 3RD CO OF THE 43RD RANGER BN SECURING BRIDGE 29 AT BR 187519 ON QL-19. REPORTEDLY THE BRIDGE WAS DESTROYED AND THE COMPANY COMMANDER WAS WOUNDED; NO FURTHER INFORMATION ON THE CONTACT IS AVAILABLE AT THIS TIME. AND AT 1915 HRS, THE COMMUNISTS ATTACKED TWO STRATEGIC POSITIONS MANNED BY THE 279TH RF BN AT BR 148517 AND 159505 JUST SOUTH OF QL-19. NO DETAILS ON THIS ATTACK ARE AVAILABLE AT THIS TIME.

4. THE KHANH HOA, HEAVY FIGHTING PERSISTS IN THE VICINITY OF HILL 519 (BQ 439161), WHICH IS STRATEGICALLY LOCATED JUST SOUTH OF QL-21 NEAR THE KHANH HOA/ DARLAC BORDER. ON MARCH 5 AN ESTIMATED BN PLUS SIZED COMMUNIST FORCE--NOW BELIEVED BY SOME GVN OFFICERS TO BE THE 25TH NVA REGT--OVERRAN 2 PLTS OF THE 4TH CO/246TH RF
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BN WHICH WERE OCCUPYING THE HILL. THE REMAINDER OF THE 246TH RF BN, THE 245TH RF BN, AND THE 207TH RECON CO WERE CALLED IN TO RETAKE THE HILL LATER THE SAME DAY. THESE UNITS, HOWEVER, ENCOUNTERED CONSIDERABLE MORTAR, AA, AND 57 AND 75--MM RECOILLESS RIFLE FIRE, AND WITHDREW WITH HEAVY CASUALTIES. (THE 207TH AND 245TH HAVE SUBSEQUENTLY BEEN PULLED OUT OF KHANH DUONG, BUT THE 246TH REMAINS). THE 228TH RF BN AND THE 1ST CO OF THE 227TH RF BN FROM KHANH HOA, THE 242ND RF BN PLUS ONE CO FROM DARLAC, THE

2/19 ARMORED GR (WHICH HAS 15 APC'S) FROM BINH THUAN, AND SEVERAL SMALLER SUPPORT UNITS WERE SUBSEQUENTLY BROUGHT IN TO RETAKE HILL 519 AND HAVE ENGAGED THE COMMUNIST FORCES IN THE AREA. THE 272ND RF BN IS ALSO IN THE AREA BUT PRESENTLY IS BEING HELD BACK AS A RESERVE FORCE. THUS FAR THE GVN FORCES IN THE BATTLE HAVE HAD 75 SOLDIERS KIA OR MIA, AND 42 WIA. BOTH AS A RESULT OF THE GROUND FIGHTING AND OF NUMEROUS GVN AIR STRIKES, THE COMMUNIST ARE REPORTED TO HAVE TAKEN COMPARABLE CASUALTIES. QL-21 REMAINS CLOSED BOTH NORTH OF HILL 519 AND AT BRIDGE 31 (BQ 419165), WHICH WAS DESTROYED BY THE COMMUNISTS AT 060530 HRS.

5. AT 071045 HRS, THE COMMUNISTS LOBBED ELEVEN 107 AND 122-MM ROCKETS INTO KONTUM CITY. THE ROUNDS REPORTEDLY KILLED 4 CIVILIANS AND WOUNDED 2 OTHERS.

6. FOR SOME TIME, GVN INTELLIGENCE HAS ANTICIPATED THAT THE COMMUNISTS WOULD ATTEMPT TO INTERDICT LOC'S IN THE REGION AND THEN FOLLOW UP WITH GROUND ATTACKS ON CENTERS OF POPULATION. AT PRESENT, HOWEVER, THERE IS NO INDICATION OF WHAT AREAS, IF ANY, THE COMMUNISTS HAVE TARGETTED FOR GROUND ATTACK.
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